

Tears Hit Ice Slowly

Part 1: This is not how it started.

- Finally, the President of the Government has finally declared war on Sanlow – I am completely paralyzed when I hear the reporter’s voice.

- I can’t believe he dares to say it with such joy – spits my father furious.

- Do the news really surprise you? – asks my sister with the same anger.

My mother doesn’t say anything, she too is disappointed. Then we all join in her silence, looking at our plates of barely touched food. Alice screams at the operating system to turn off the tv, we don’t want to continue listening to how they take a subject as painful as war as if it were a simple game. Violence does not solve anything, how is a war going to do it? Although our has been commercially attacked for Sanlow as long as I can remember, I’ve always seen it for what it is, an ego fight. We have been like this for years, and every day the Government makes worse decisions. Decisions that only widen the gap between rich and poor, decisions that only put at risk what remains of nature, decisions that ignore all possible minorities. I’m not surprised by this statement either, too many influential people wanted this conflict to escalate so they could satisfy their bloodlust. They are convinced that in some twisted way this will benefit them. My hands tingle from the desire to draw them with bills in their eyes and sticking out their tongues hungrily.

During history humanity has suffered countless wars, it is assumed that in the year 4293 we have evolved, but we keep repeating the same mistakes.

Part 2: This is not just to say hello.

I keep banging insistently on the cold iron surface. Just as he had done so many times before, but this time everything was different. Although I refused to accept it, we were no longer those children who saw each other every day, and smiled as if their silent gazes shared a private joke. That, at least I have treasured forever. We had never talked for more than five minutes, but going to class each morning for ten years had led us to forge a connection. So when we stopped seeing each other when we changed schedules, I refused to pretend that nothing had happened and started banging on his door just to say hello every morning. And every morning he greeted me back and politely invited me in. And every morning I refused using the excuse that I was in a hurry. The thing is that this connection was the one that pulled me in when I read his name on the list.

The list where’s the names of who will become the soldiers of this stupid war, who will be killed because of someone they didn’t know. And was going to go, he was going to fight in a battle that had nothing to do with him, he was going to give his life for stupid causes that did not belong to him and they were going to turn him into a glorious fallen hero who would be the example of thousands deluded children. Okay, maybe I should stop thinking so... My way. Perhaps he must be saying goodbye to his mother after receiving the news of his certain death. Perhaps he has been brainwashed like everyone else in class and is celebrating having appeared on the list of those who will be “lucky enough to fight for their country and defend their own”. Maybe I’m still overthinking and he hasn’t even figured it out yet. So I decide that in any of those cases it would be best to leave. And just as I turn around I hear the old metal door creak open.

- Sorry I was taking a shower – his voice is as soft as all the times we’ve spoken. It seems that he has dressed in a hurry, his shirt’s on backwards and his hair’s still wet.

- Have you seen the lists? – I ask cautiously narrowing my eyes. He closes his completely.

- Yes, I took a shower because I felt dirty. Raisins? – he asks as always when I visit him. For the first time I agree to his proposal, and he doesn’t hide his surprise. I think I’ll never forget the smile he put on.

Part 3: This is not a moment to forget.

When someone insistently knocked on the door, I took it for granted that it was the delivery robot, how wrong I was... The first thing I saw was his face, he was practically sweating nervously.

It was the first time I saw him for days, I’ve been avoiding him. Ever since I saw him pretending to be pro-war with his friends.

He came in asking for some Biology notes from last year, how bad he’s at lying makes me laugh. That’s why I follow his lie and take him to my room to give him the notes.

- Are you going to continue with this farce or...? – I told him encouraging him to sit with me on the bed.

- Why do you avoid me for days? – I expected that question but I still didn’t know how to explain what I felt. I told him how I had seen the way he pretended in front of his friends and the disappointment I felt towards him ever since.

- But, if you know why I did it, why do you get angry? For me there’s no other option but to pretend, and you know it... - I noticed how his voice trembled and I couldn’t help but feel bad.

- Because why? Because you’re faking it! You’ve become part of the problem... - I tried my best not to yell at him but I couldn’t.

- And? Is there another option? Tell me which? To be isolated and judged by each and every person in this country? – he yelled at me frustrated in response.

- Like me, you say? – I started to laugh out loud.

- That’s why you don’t understand me! Even if you say it, you don’t understand the fear I have that they take away the only thing I have. And yes, my reputation is the only thing I have, my parents took care of that... - We had already stopped screaming, but our voices still overflowed with decision.

- Scared... Do you think you’re the only one who’s scared? – I said approaching him.

- Of course not, but it is you who does not understand that each one feels and processes the change that this war implies in a different way. In case you really are aware of what a war is, of course – at some point he began to whisper – This war means for us to lose everything we knew, throw away our dreams, take away our individuality. God, they’re going to turn me into one of their puppets, Zadkiel... - Currently he was the only person who called me by my full name, instead of “Zed”. I never dared to ask why, almost out of fear that he would stop doing it.

And seeing him call me like that, with his eyes full of tears, broke me. And I promise each other that we would do anything to avoid Asahi from going to war

Part 4: This is not how it ended.

- I give up – I said tired – I'm not a musical genius like you – I looked him straight in the eye, he was laughing at me. He had been trying to teach me to play the electric violin (his favorite instrument) for several weeks, but I know the same as the first day, or even less.

- And I'm not a drawing genius like you, but look at this – he pulls out of a horrible doodle he made a few days ago, and that is supposed to be a self-portrait and his masterpiece...

I roll my eyes, we've figured out a way to pass the time doing a little bit of everything to pretend Asahi hasn't been locked up here for... a month?

- It's been a month – I say out loud when I realize it. My voice must show some sadness because he answers me quickly.

- Hey don't be like that, you've managed to make me survive another month! You have no idea how much I appreciate your parents letting me hide out here.

- My parents? The idea was mine! Besides, what was the other option, letting you go to the battlefield? - he just hugs me and I think we fell asleep until we started to hear the alarm.

Fear invades us, we knew it could happen, but...

- It's the air raid warning alarm - he exclaims as if I didn't already know. I clench my teeth, I don't know what to do. I feel the need to go to help but I'm not leaving Asahi here alone.

Suddenly I feel him running towards the door and I grab him roughly as I ask him what he's doing.

- I want to help! - yells at me over the noise of the alarm.

- You can not! They consider you a traitor for not having gone to war, if they find you... - He won't let me finish.

- Look, I'm scared too, but someone taught me that you should fight for what's right regardless of the consequences - when he finishes speaking I want to hit him. However I kiss him and we run off into the chaos.